

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 9, 2012 MEETING

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Nelson, George Mason, Martha Neale, Everett Stuart, and Ken Ayars.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Pagliarini, Will Wright, and Dave Wallace.

GUESTS: Max Hence from Hillandale Farm-Westerly, Harvey Perry from Westerly Land Trust and Brad Hart from DiPrete Engineering representing Fletcher Rd. North Kingstown.

STAFF: Lis Peterman DEM/Agriculture, Michelle Sheehan DEM/Planning, Mike Moorman USDA/NRCS, and Mike Kenyon USDA/NRCS

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI by George Mason. The April 19, 2012 meeting minutes were reviewed. Kevin Nelson made a motion to accept the minutes from the April 19, 2012 meeting as written, motion was seconded by Everett Stuart, motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion of farms in negotiations. The Clifford Farm closed, Garrison closed and Cucumber Hill Farm (Paulhus) also

closed. The Pezza Farm and also St. Pierre are at the Federal NRCS level for review and should close in the fall. The Tefft Farm, Recchia and Manfredi Farms are in the process of having their appraisals completed. The Payne Farm is in the process of having its survey completed. There is approximately \$600,000 left in available funds. If the bond is approved by voters in November the state farmland protection program will have approximately 5 million dollars available over the next 5 years. George Mason suggested that agenda items be swapped due to the guests at the meeting and begin scoring of farms.

Max Hence from Hillandale farm in Westerly spoke briefly about the soil remediation that has occurred to improve overall soil quality and also the history of the farm and current farming operation/activities. Harvey Perry from the Westerly Land Trust spoke about the Trust's interest in preserving the development rights to the farm. Hillandale farm was scored and achieved an overall score of 27 (minimum score for acceptance into the program is 35). Kevin Nelson made a motion to accept the score of the Hillandale Farm and advised a revised submission of the application based on soils of higher relative agriculture value, Ken Ayars seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously. The Fletcher Farm (Regnier, North Kingstown) was scored and achieved a score of 39.8, Ramrod Farm/Dubbs (Hopkinton) was scored and achieved a total score of 39.2, and Fort Hill Farm/ O'Leary (Burrillville) was scored and achieved a total score of 36.2. Paris St. Pierre (Little Compton) could not be scored because the parcel size was less than the statutory minimum of five acres. A

motion was made by Kevin Nelson to accept the scores of O'Leary, Dubbs, and Fletcher and to authorize appraisals on all 3 farms, Everett Stuart seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion about using the Cabot Farms funds towards Sampson. A motion was made by Kevin Nelson to allocate \$300,000 towards Cabot subject to the availability of funding, the motion was seconded by Martha Neale, motion passed unanimously. George Mason abstained from voting.

There was a discussion about stewardship and thus far only one meeting of the stewardship subcommittee. It was suggested that URI students could possibly conduct baseline surveys. Existing covenants and easements should be re-examined and possibly updated and perhaps a subcommittee complete the task. George Mason offered to contribute services of the lawyers from the Little Compton Land Trust to assist with language in revising the covenant.

Federal Farmland and Ranch Protection Program has received additional funds and currently Payne, Pezza and St. Pierre applications are at the National office for review.

A motion was made by George Mason to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Everett Stuart, motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lis Peterman, Division of Agriculture, RIDEM